~~12~~ Biddulph G-3 (1873-1878) 1880 ~~Afgh-Afghanistan-Afgh~~
4 AV3 Dard AV3

such as traders and travellers, were put under surveillance. 241 The next morning a party was sent round by the Ra to bring every man in the place inside the fort. Some would make a pretence of hiding, but in time all were hunted out and brought in. The women of the place had meanwhile assembled and formed a double line from the inner castle to the outer gate of the fort, each being provided with a stout willow stick. When all was ready, the Ra rode out, as if to leave the fort. On arriving at the head of the line, a cry was raised for a present, which he promptly complied with and then rode on between the lines. All the men were then 241 bound to follow him, one by one. The Wuzeers and mem- 626 bers of the Ra's family were allowed to ransom themselves like the Ra, but the rest had to run the gauntlet and get through as best they might. The women plied their sticks with hearty good will, and unpopular members of society came off badly.

On the following day the men again assembled in the fort, and formed themselves into two parties, one under the Ra inside the castle, and the other under the Wuzeer in the outer fort. Both sides were provided with wood-ashes and dust which had previously been collected for the occasion, and a sham fight ensued. The Wuzeer's party tried to storm the castle, while the Ra's men showered earth and ashes on them. Sometimes the assailants were successful, and the Ra was made a prisoner in his own castle. After an hour or two he consented to pay a ransom, which was fixed at a bullock and three sheep for the victors, and a robe of honour for their leader. If, on the contrary, the Wuzeer's party were defeated, every man had to give a present to the Ra. The parts of both days not occupied in the performances were spent in feasting, polo, dancing, and consulting the Dainyals.

[177] This curious festival, which was said to mark the time for pruning vines and the first budding of the apricot trees, was discontinued when the advent of Sikh troops introduced a stricter observance of Mahommedan forms,[1] and forced women to remain in greater seclusion. A trace of it still exists in Ponyal, where the women are privileged on that day to address abusive remarks, in jest, to the Ra when he first comes out of his house. The whole festival appears to show some connection with that of the Holi, which takes place in India about the same time.

[1] The first Governor appointed under the Sikhs was a Mahommedan, who did much towards introducing a more orthodox type of the faith.

1: Drew G-3 (1862-1872) 1875 AV1 Kashmir
Dard AV3
Burusho AV7

D 623

each is free to pursue its own without severing the federal bond. Thus I have heard that some villages have joined with one power—have agreed to pay tribute—while others of the same valley have done the same to the rival power. But there must be some limit to this. They could not, of course, actively join on opposite sides.

D 642 626

My knowledge of the working of these institutions is very incomplete; on the whole I incline to think that with the republics there is less of wars of ambition than with those valleys that are governed by an hereditary ruler, less of bloodshed on a large scale, such as is brought about by or for the dispossession of dynasties. But I do not think that the internal state is so secure and quiet as under a Raja; in the republics personal independence and liberty of action are so much the rule, that no one interferes to prevent even violence.

D 567

In the Table given at p. 456, the last column shows the custom of the various states with respect to slavery. There are three categories. The first includes Gilgit, Astor, Nagar, &c.; in these places not only is slavery unknown now that some of them are under the rule of the Maharaja of Kashmir, but, according to my information, it was not the custom before.

Another category includes the Republics; in these, slaves when captured in a foray are kept as servants, as we saw was the case in Chilás with those they brought away from Astor; but they are not used as a commodity to be bought and sold.

B 567

Thirdly, in the Rajaships of Hunza, Yásin, and Chitrál, slaves are openly bought and sold; the Rajas themselves are the chief dealers—that is to say, they are sellers—while merchants, generally from Badakhshán, are the buyers. The greater expense of sustaining these governments, as compared with the republics, has probably been the cause of the Rajas entering on this trade, in which they will sell, in default of others, their own subjects even. Many are the people, and of races various—Dárd and Dográ, Panjábí and Pathán—whom the fortune of war has allowed to fall into the hands of one or other of these rulers, and who, having been bartered by their avaricious captor, are passing their lives as exiles and slaves in Badakhshán or in Turkistán.

4: Durand G-3 (1888-93) 190 AV1 Kashmir
Dard A43

When the water arrived, an old man pronounced a long incantation over the gourd containing it, then handed it to the woman, who, after drinking a little of it, began again her weary wanderings, sprinkling the water as she went round the circle. And so it went on, the Dainyal occasionally chewing a piece of the sacred cedar as an additional help, until all the subjects she had learnt up, or thought of interest to her hearers, were exhausted. She prophesied various things in our favour, and gave vent to one or two shrewd sayings about local abuses, which seemed to please her audience immensely. No doubt in the old days public opinion could often only reach a chief in this manner, and full advantage seems to have been occasionally taken of the opportunity, which the performance of the Dainyal afforded, of enlightening the mind of an unpopular ruler. Finally, when it was evident to all that the source of inspiration had for the day run dry, a couple of men came into the ring, and one of them stooping down and giving the Dainyal a back, she took a run and flying leap on to it, and was so gracefully carried out of the circle. A few minutes' rest in a neighbouring house, and a sprinkling of water, enabled her to come to. The whole performance was extremely curious, and there is no doubt whatever that the onlookers firmly believed in the woman being inspired.

The ceremony of initiation is unpleasant; we fortunately were spared seeing it. If any one, man or woman, claims to be inspired by the fairies, they have to go through the rites described above with a recognised Dainyal. At the end of the performance a goat is brought in and decapitated, and the novice